10/26/76

Dear Art,

Mark Lane has not only stolen my work and that of a friend, Les Payne - he has parlayed it into a fat advance on a rippoff-fake book. I will be writing the publisher soon to put him on notice.

The friend is Les Payne, of Newsday. He is as great a human being as he is a reporter. He has a gold Pulitzer as credentials for the latter and me for the former.

Les can't now do anything because for about 10 days he has been in south Africa. Not just South Africa. He has been fighting for visas for a long time. He took off when they came. His plans include Rhodesia and South Africa. When I tell you he is black you know what kind of man he is. As of my last word he was in Johannesburg.

Lane knows nothing about this. When he had come to realize what a mess he'd made of the JFK possibilities in Congress there was nothing left but King. So he went out there and picked up what he could from Freed and his odd bag. Freed has been trying to get me to sign away my rights and others of the gang have been following around behind.

Believing that Les was already in South Africa Lane went to those Lane had interviewed at my suggestion and said Les had sent him because he was in South Africa and could not be there in person. He then duplicated part of Les' work and mine and to this he added irrational improvisations. Once he got a Congressman to use this - with phoney credit - he had enough to take a publisher. I understand it is Prentiss-Hall.

Now Dick Gregory, who has his own insanities eating him, is in with Mark for a real commercialization. Gregory has someone else's wrong-headed nonsense from Atlanta, the fakery of one Byron Watson. I've had it for years. Ain't real and there are two official investigations to prove it. I have one and expect the other under FOIA.

We are talking about disaster as well as thievery.

So, can you please see what you can learn from Don Freed and any of the other nuts around him on this? They started Lane off with Les' copyrighted work. I know all about that beginning, too. But seonc-hand.

After pulling his ripoff Lane went out there again - this is the time I asked you to see if you could get a tape - and then, by the worst of coincidences, he went to one a friend of mine had approached for a movie based on my work. At best this warned that guy off, so it is hurtful that way, too.

I have every reason to believe that he is on my back on this under FOIA, too. I've been suing on this- alone except for Jim Lesar, who is handling it - and now the whores are duplicating the suit in the traditional way. Once they hear about it they file requests. If they ask for what I did they get it when I do. A judge held forth on this a couple of weeks ago in my suit.

If you can do anything, thanks.

Best,